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THE DANGER OF  
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# THE DANGER OF PEACE

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF A LECTURE  
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## ARGUMENT

*THAT the greatest danger of the immediate future will lie in the demand for a premature peace.*

*The will to peace that is common to us all is fundamentally a shrinking from consequences: It has never prevented war. It tends to generate forms of cowardice, illusory hopes, and irrational forms of "pacifism," and to produce useless compromises. It puts the "fear of war" above duties, some of them imperative. It is therefore useless and dangerous.*

*What the religious pacifist theory involves and in what it seems mistaken.*

*The pacifism of "Mr. Norman Angell" irrelevant to the actual situation.*

*Certain totally irrational forms of pacifism.*

*Is it possible to arrive at a satisfactory peace by agreement with Germany?*

*Is it possible to secure by treaty guarantees against war?*

*Fallacies involved in the notion of preventing war by judicial or conciliation machinery.*



*Governments do not cause war: at the most they determine its "declaration."*

*Wars are not caused by definite disputes.*

*Armaments do not cause war.*

*Nature of the positive Will to Peace that alone can prevent war: Germany is striving to make the development of this positive will impossible.*

*The terms of the future treaty will not express the main results of the war. These results depend upon the completeness of the defeat of Germany: Germany's unconditional surrender our sole objective. No result that can be fully expressed in a treaty should satisfy us.*

*The treaty must represent agreement between us and our Allies: not agreement between us and Germany.*



# THE DANGER OF PEACE

**I**T is the purpose of this lecture to maintain that certain forms and manifestations of what may be called the will to peace, are not only useless now and for ever, but are positively dangerous now. It will be argued that the war has become, in a certain sense, an end in itself.

But it is necessary to state more fully the nature of the thesis I wish to maintain. We have now been at war for about twelve months. To many of us the war has become an accumulating horror. The stress increases and must, for some time, increase. The realization of what is happening is becoming more poignant. There is, too, an increasing sense that the longer the war lasts, the heavier will be the bill to be paid at the end of it, wholly apart from loss immediately due to the fighting. All these things tend to produce a demand for peace at the earliest possible moment. At present that de-

mand is in the main latent. But it is forming; and in the formation of it lies, at the present moment, our greatest danger.

Already, I think, the German Government is playing for a draw. Germany still hopes to effect by force a favourable compromise; but she sees already that it may prove impossible to do so. Accordingly, she is making desperate efforts to impress neutrals with a sense of her power and ferocity, and to frighten the civilian population of Britain. No amount of outrage and slaughter of women and children, or sinking of fishing boats and passenger boats, or scattering of bombs on watering places and villages—or even on residential London—can make the least difference to the military position. No one can know that better than the German General Staff. The main object of these atrocities must be to produce in the civilian population a desire for peace. France at this moment has no civilian population that counts; Russia's civilian population is hopelessly out of reach; it is for our particular benefit that these amenities are devised. They are precautionary measures. As soon as the hope of effecting by force a decision in its favour disappears, the German

Government will offer terms. The greatest danger ahead for us lies in the demand for the acceptance of those terms; the demand for a premature peace that will almost certainly arise when the opportunity for its expression comes. The first moment of real victory—which will be the first of assured safety—will be the moment of danger for us.

The will to peace must be distinguished from pacifism. The term “pacifism” is almost hopelessly vague; but, whatever it implies, it would seem to imply a theory. If it does not, it is simply an unnecessary word. But the demand for a premature peace will not in the main arise from any theory. It will be simply a manifestation of universal feeling; an undisciplined assertion of that will to peace which is common to us all. It will spring not from anything that ought to be called pacifism, but from desire for peace. It is the merest truism to say that the natural man prefers peace to war; and some at least of the reasons for this preference are too obvious to insist upon. But this practically universal will to peace is not a mere product of fear. It is an outcome also of that disturbance of habit which war produces, and which is one of the really

valuable by-products of war. Men are jolted out of their ruts and forced to face fundamental things. It is very good for them; but it is very uncomfortable. Moreover this will to peace, that we all share, is largely the result of our shrinking from the thought of the suffering and death of others. The sacrifice of life that is going on now, hour by hour, is indeed almost intolerable to the imagination. We must not allow ourselves to contemplate it. To do so may well be to lose sight of everything else; to lose sight of the real issues in the horror aroused by what is, after all, incidental.

And here I will pause to point out, in parenthesis, that while war of course produces manifold suffering, it none the less produces also happiness. At this moment tens of thousands of men engaged, are feeling that now, for the first time in their lives, they are wholly right with the world; that they are doing their whole duty and nothing else. In that consciousness they are dying; and if that be not happiness, I do not know what happiness can be.

The common will to peace, which is and I suppose always has been in all men, is really a negative thing. It is not a will to peace in any positive sense; it is a mere revolt or shrinking

from the consequences of war. This, I think, is why it is and always has been powerless to prevent war. It has always existed in all or in nearly all men; but it has never prevented war. I hope that at least among us it never will. It is a rational shrinking and fear that is overcome when the call comes. We may safely say that a nation which refused war merely by reason of this natural fear and shrinking would be hopelessly decadent and doomed to disappear. The flesh would have conquered the spirit and the fire of liberty have gone out in such a people. It seems to me utterly futile to count on this common and negative will to peace to prevent war in the future.

It is a natural and inextinguishable thing, this common will to peace, and without it, I suppose, man would be a beast; but it is, none the less, in itself a useless thing. And under our present circumstances and always in a righteous war, it is a dangerous thing. It cannot prevent war; but when, in war, the point of safety is reached, when the enemy offers terms, then this natural desire for peace may so far get the mastery as to bring about the conclusion of a premature and useless treaty. Always in such a case the result will be more war.

Though the common will to peace is partly based on fear, yet it is not to be called cowardice. Fear is rational and practically universal. The saint, perhaps, need not fear at all; all we others fear, and rightly. But fear is not cowardice; cowardice is that which refuses, because of fear, to do what is known to be duty. Yet it cannot be doubted that the common will to peace does tend to generate forms of cowardice. A man's natural fear may so bias him against action that increases danger, that he will refuse to look facts in the face. Such refusal is rightly called cowardice.

Nor can it be doubted that, in this way and in others, the natural shrinking from the consequences of war, tends to generate irrational forms of what is called pacifism. There are many who call themselves pacifists who are merely persons who have been led, by the obsession of the horror of war, into posing, irrationally, as philosophers.

When we come to consider what is properly called "pacifism"—the state of mind which does not merely shrink from war, but which condemns war on theoretical grounds—we are at once confronted with confusion. It is evident that it is not with a single coherent theory that



we have to deal. The voices of pacifism are no less discordant than strident. Tolstoy was, I suppose, a pacifist. Mr. Norman Angell is described as a pacifist; possibly even I, in my humble way, am a pacifist. A great deal that goes by the name seems to be no more than an incoherent and more or less emotional expression of what I have called the common will to peace. But there seem to be distinguishable in the confusion two types of pacifist theory that may be taken seriously; a religious philosophic theory which is very old, and a pseudo-philosophic theory, which is that of Mr. Norman Angell.

There are, I understand, a certain number of people who go about, with their heads rather high in the air, saying that war is wholly evil and that they at least will not soil their hands. I am, I confess, a little suspicious of this attitude. Such people may be exponents of a lofty and mystical pacifism; but they have an air of superiority and sometimes a smile of conscious saintliness that fills me with doubt. In any case they seem to me but poor exponents of that doctrine. That doctrine forbids recourse to violence in all circumstances, because it is always better to suffer violence than to do it. But this

assertion can only be true if to suffer violence is to suffer nothing that really matters. If by violence real injury can be done to me, that injury is not done to me only; it is done to all human beings. A cannot attack B without threatening C; A cannot inflict real injury on B without inflicting injury on all human relations. Now to say that I have no right to resist the doing of injury to mankind would be all but absolute nonsense. It would mean, if it meant anything, that the word injury has no meaning at all; that in fact there is no difference between good and evil, and nothing of any value or importance in life. But certainly this is not what the pacifist mystic says. What the doctrine of non-resistance rests upon is an assertion, not that there are no values in life, but that there are no values that are not universal, absolute, and immutable. If that be so, then no violence can rob me of anything of value. It is of importance to me that I should do no violence to another; it is of no real importance to me that another should cut my throat, destroy my home or outrage my children. The only person concerned in the business who really suffers is he who commits the violence.

If this be true then it may be said that the

only right attitude towards life is one that is wholly incompatible with the doing of violence to any one in any case. It is asserted that this is the Christian attitude. Christ said: "Resist not him that is evil"; but Christ also drove out the money-changers from the temple with whipcord, and, moreover, overthrew their tables. It is undeniable that Christendom, as a whole, has consistently refused to read into the words I have quoted, or into the words about turning the other cheek, an intention to state literally a universal law. To say that Christendom so refused because it has never been Christian, is to say that all, or nearly all, the great saints of the past failed to understand the meaning of the Gospel. That, on the face of it, is a rash saying and one that needs proof. It seems evident that such proof is hardly possible.

However this may be, the whole doctrine of non-resistance rests and can only rest on an assertion that no real injury can be done to anyone by violence, that is, that no violence can deprive anyone of anything of absolute value. For if evil can be wrought by violence, then refusal to resist is, or may be, a surrender to evil.

If by the words referred to above Christ

meant that in certain cases the sure way of preventing evil lies in refusal to resist the evildoer, that may be accepted as true without allowing that the argument is affected. It is evident that, in some cases, non-resistance is no preventive at all. If by the cutting of A's throat real evil is done, then non-resistance simply allows that evil to be done.

Certain corollaries of this reasoning must be pointed out. It is important to realize that the doctrine of non-resistance is one that admits of no logical compromise. I desire to emphasize two points, even at the risk of insisting on the obvious. To say that A has a right to resist the violence of B, but that war can never be justified, is flat self-contradiction. The justification of defensive war is ultimately derived from the right of the individual to resist injury by another's violence. From the same conception of the right of the individual is derived the claim of society to a right to use force against criminals. If A has a right to resist the violence of B, it follows absolutely that A, B, and C have a right to combine to resist the violence of D, E, and F. Such combined resistance, when D, E, and F are fellow-citizens, is what we call police; when D, E, and F are outsiders it is what we

call defensive war. If it be said that in this case of combined resistance neither A, B, nor C are personally and directly threatened, that may be true. But the distinction makes no difference. A, B, and C are threatened with real injury by the violence of D, E, and F, and it is of no importance to them or to anyone whether the injury is threatened directly or indirectly. To deny that defensive war is justified is necessarily to deny that A has any right to resist B's violence.

My second subsidiary point is this. A doctrine which forbids me to resist violence done to myself, logically forbids me to resist violence done to anyone else. To say that I am bound not to resist having my throat cut, but that I may resist on behalf of my child is simply irrational. If no real injury is done to me when my throat is cut, then no real injury is done by cutting my child's throat. It may also be worth while to point out that if these propositions could both be true—which they cannot be—then all defensive war would certainly be justified. In all such war we fight to defend our children at least as much as to defend ourselves. The proper place of the pacifist who asserts the truth of these two contradictory propositions and then

goes on to make confusion worse confounded by denying the justification of defensive war, would seem to be in some school of elementary logic. Quite certainly his proper place is not the world of ideas.

It is just possible for a man who is not muddle-headed to hold the doctrine of absolute non-resistance. It is a view I can respect upon condition of absolute sincerity and consistency. It seems, however, to me to be a mistaken view. I am ready, at least for the sake of argument, to assume that only those values which are universal are real. But I would maintain that the thing of fundamental and universal value in human life is what I should call liberty. By "liberty" I mean not merely Kant's self-determined imperative of duty but, more widely, the freedom of the will to good. This is not the mere liberty to be which no violence can destroy; it is also the liberty to seek the good and to find expression for it; and these are things that violence may destroy. The will to good—the striving after the highest visible—call it, with the Greeks, justice, or, with Aquinas, the realization of God—call it what you will—is the profoundest thing in man and is that which gives value to his life. For every man the thing of



supreme importance is his freedom to seek the good and to realize it as he can and as he sees it. If that be so, then the supreme evil is not loss of goods, or of friends, or of health, still less is it death, it is the suppression of freedom. The worst thing that can happen to a man is that another should dominate and control his will by violence or threats of violence. This, I think, is why we all feel that despotism is an evil, however enlightened or benevolent: this is why we feel that legal slavery is something far worse than what has been called wage slavery under modern conditions: this is why the use of organized force to dominate or suppress the will of others is sin against humanity. Germany, it seems to me, has denied liberty and made war upon the soul of man. This is why I think we are now justified in waging against Germany relentless war.

There is another form of religious pacifism in the real existence of which some highly educated persons may find it hard to believe. It is real, nevertheless, and whatever its philosophic value, its actuality calls for recognition. There are people who aver that no Christian can rightfully kill any man under any circumstances, because any man may, at the time of his death

be yet unconverted and by the fatal blow be sent straight to eternal punishment. Had you not killed him he might have been saved. The horrors of war are as nothing to the horror of this appalling proposition. But one is bound to admit that anyone who believes this would be right—if on this view there is any such thing as “right”—in refusing to take any part in war. I can only say that, if this be true, the terms good and evil appear to be interchangeable. If the universe be so arranged that a man’s chance of escaping eternal punishment depends in any degree on the flight of a bullet, it is clear that no such justice as we dream of on earth is known in Heaven. In that case, the question I have been considering is fundamentally meaningless.

As to the form of pacifism represented by Mr. Norman Angell, it seems doubtful whether it is logically necessary to say anything here about it. Much of what Mr. Angell has written seems to me absolutely right as far as it goes. It does not seem to me to go very far. One thing at least is clear: that to prove that war cannot in an economic sense be made to pay, would prove nothing to the present purpose. The slightness of the connection between a synchron-

ized bank-rate and the movements of the human spirit is being demonstrated at present in what is to me a very satisfactory manner. I am quite in agreement with those who say that if the gains of war could be adequately measured in money, war would never be worth making. But I doubt if war ever was made for money: or if it ever was, it was on so small a scale that one might fairly call it brigandage. It may be said that what this school of pacifists really asserts is that war can do nothing but destroy. I am not concerned to dispute that proposition, though I doubt if it means anything. I do not think one can really conceive of pure destruction, unless it were the destruction of everything at once. But there are things that ought to be destroyed, and I think our business in this war is just that—destruction. In any case, it certainly does not follow from an admission of the destructive and uneconomic character of war, that we should make peace with Germany as soon as possible.

There are certain forms of what is called pacifism that appear to be so completely irrational as to make it doubtful whether they are worth mentioning at all. I was reading the other day that there are people prepared to refuse to fight on the ground that human life is sacred. I do

not know exactly what "sacred" means in this connection. But this view appears to imply that if A tries to kill B, then, out of respect for the sacredness of human life, C must stand aside and allow B to be killed. I can only remark that, in this case, C's conviction of the sacredness of his own life would appear to be stronger than his belief in the sacredness of B's.

Again, there are people, it seems, who cry out for peace at the earliest possible moment, on the ground that war is itself the greatest evil that can befall a nation. Since nothing worse than war can possibly happen, it is always irrational to make war. The Germans have done so much to make war seem wholly brutal and abominable that one may be inclined to sympathize a little with this view. But it implies that suffering is not only an evil in itself but the greatest of all possible evils. My own answer to such a contention has already been suggested. Suffering is no evil in itself. Suffering is good or evil according to the nature of that of which it is an incident. A people that revolts from mere suffering revolts against life. At the best this view involves a stupid materialism. At the worst it is a philosophy of cowardice, involves a surrender to evil and expresses a fear of life.

There are, I am told, people who say: "Stop the war this instant! Cease all resistance. Let the Germans come and do what they like. You will see how nicely they will behave. The spectacle of our sublime self-surrender will turn their hearts." The theory underlying this kind of talk would seem to be not a pacifist theory, but a theory of human nature. It is doubtful whether there is anything worth saying about this. But it may be remarked, first, that it does not seem clear that there could actually be anything very sublime about our surrender at the present moment. Germany, at this moment, would jump at an offer of separate peace from us. What we should sacrifice would not be ourselves, but France and Belgium. And, secondly, even if we could not offer peace without incurring the risk of the fate of Belgium, I can see no reason why the Germans should be moved, except, perhaps, to laughter. I think the Germans are a stupid people: but I do not think them so stupid as to abandon their view of life because we showed that we disagreed with them. The total irrelevance of our behaviour to the philosophy of life expressed by their action, could not but be obvious, even to them.

My general conclusion is that the theories of

pacifism are either unsound, or have little or no bearing upon the actual circumstances of the moment. Nor do I think that the existence of such extreme views is likely ever to be of much practical importance. So far as they really exist they will cause a certain diversion of energy from the main purpose, and they will do something to strengthen any demand for peace that may arise. They will certainly not create that demand. But there is another form of what may be called pacifist argument which is, probably, more dangerous than pacifist theory proper. It is sought to show that it is possible to arrive at a reasonable and satisfactory treaty of peace by way of agreement with Germany. If that be so, then, of course, such a peace should be arrived at as soon as possible. I am of opinion that any such conclusion is demonstrably irrational. But life itself is not long enough for demonstrations; and certainly the space at my disposal is not large enough. I can do little more than make certain suggestions.

We are, of course, fighting for safety—that we may not become as Belgium—and so long as a sense of the danger of that consummation prevails, there can arise among us no serious doubt about our action. But it is clear that



doubt and confusion exist among us as to our ulterior objects in the war, apart from immediate necessities of self-defence. Confusion and doubt as to what we are fighting for will greatly strengthen the demand for peace, so soon as a sense of safety is reached. It was suggested to me, a short while ago, that it would be both beneficial and amusing, if some neutral government were to propose an armistice and a conference for the purpose of discussing and determining what all the turmoil is about. The maker of this suggestion maintained that the result of such a conference would be to show that no answer to the question is possible, and he expressed strong views on the absurdity of continuing to fight under such conditions.

The answer to the question is, indeed, perhaps not so simple now as it was a few months ago. When the war began we had to help to defeat a deliberate attempt by the German powers to ruin France, to block Russia into Asia, to dominate the Balkans, to secure their hold on wavering Italy, and to isolate Britain. There could be little real doubt of the desirability of defeating that criminal project. But it is arguable that that attempt is already defeated. It would be well not to assume that that is really so, without

more definite grounds than exist at present for such an opinion. But there certainly exists a tendency to argue that terms involving the defeat of Germany's aggressive designs are all that we can rationally require.

On the other hand it is so obvious that a treaty which merely re-established the conditions prevailing before the war would be a mere armistice, that a demand for such a treaty is not likely to be supported except by the peace-for-its-own-sake-at-any-price people. It is, however, seriously argued that the provisions of a treaty could be made such as to secure peace in Europe for the future. We have been told that this is a war to end war. The notion that it might be possible to end war by making it is not new and seems to me fallacious. There is an underlying self-contradiction. But, if anyone believes that smashing Germany's armies will destroy the possibility of war in the future, we need not quarrel with that person. He seems to have forgotten various obvious things; for instance, the actual condition of the Balkans and of South America, the possible consequences of the industrialization of Russia, the still more terrific possibilities of Asia and of Africa. But we do not need to argue with that

person. His illusions are worthy of temporary encouragement. His desire for an ultimate peace is no hindrance to action. If he merely means that to knock out Germany will be a step towards that ultimate peace, I agree with him.

But there are others. There are quite a number of people who would persuade us that one of the most important things to do at present is to discuss and decide upon the terms which we mean to impose upon the enemy, when we get the chance. Societies are organized to propagate this view and to stimulate such discussion along certain lines towards certain conclusions. It is quite clear that the object of these people is not merely to promote discussion. They are, no doubt, conscientious believers in the value of discussion; but what they really desire is, by means of discussion, to propagate certain views as to what should be done. Unless, they argue, the terms of peace involve some positive guarantee against the recurrence of war, the war will have been fought in vain. As to the means by which this result is to be secured there seems to be little agreement. It is proposed that a league of peace should be formed among civilized States. The members of the league are to bind themselves to refer all disputes arising among them, and

involving international law, to a regular judicial body, and all other disputes to some sort of board of conciliation, internationally constituted. I understand, further, that if a dispute arises between one of the States of the league, and some State outside the league, and the outsider refuses to refer the dispute to the proper board or tribunal, then the whole league will support its aggrieved member and the league of peace become, incontinently, a league for war. Again, great stress is laid, in certain quarters, on a proposal to make the manufacture of armament everywhere a government monopoly; while some, apparently, hope for a general cutting down of armies and navies by international agreement.

It seems to be implied by those who hold these views that the main object of the war is to induce the German Government to sign a treaty of peace, embodying pacifist arrangements agreed upon by the Allies. It is clearly implied that as soon as the German Government is ready to accept such a treaty, peace should be made. My first comment on this contention is as follows: I think it not unlikely that such proposals will be made first by the German Government itself. One can but faintly imagine the satisfaction with

which the German Imperial Government would enter a league of peace and discuss the constitution of an international judiciary. To fight for such a result is to fight to induce the German Government to sign yet one more scrap of paper.

But it is, obviously, not enough to say this. The whole contention is radically unsound. The future of Europe will depend in only a quite secondary manner and degree upon the exact terms of any treaty of peace. The war that was possible in 1914 is not going to be made impossible in 1920, or improbable in 1930, by any mechanical readjustments. I do not believe that any judicial or conciliation machinery could ever prevent war, or even really affect the probability of war. The very most it would ever do would be to postpone a war: and it is doubtful if the postponement of war is ever a gain. Underlying such proposals is a notion that war is made by governments as such—by Foreign Offices and diplomatists. There is even a suspicion of a suggestion that governments are apt to make war on impulse, or in passion or panic, or even light-heartedly, for the fun of the thing. War may have been made in some such fashion in the past—though I do not know when—but I

believe it to be impossible that it should be so made now. But I would go much further. I do not think that, in fact, "governments" really make war at all. All that governments do is to determine the moment at which war shall begin. War is the logical, that is, the necessary, issue of a certain psychological situation. So far as that situation is created by governments, they are responsible for the war: but certainly it is never created by any single, small group of men.

The whole idea that you can prevent war, or even appreciably reduce the probability of its occurrence, by means of quasi-judicial apparatus, appears to me to involve a clotted mass of fallacies. In the notion that by setting up a tribunal to settle a dispute between two States you would prevent a war, is implied an assumption that it is the "dispute" that would otherwise cause the war. What, I may ask, was the question that would have been laid before such a tribunal in July 1914? I suppose the question would have been whether the Serbian Government owed reparation to Austria, and, if so, what kind of reparation, and how much? There never was any such question in dispute. Reparation was not what Austria wanted. The German



Imperial Government alone was at that time in a position to state what the real question was: and the mere statement of it would have meant war. Hardly ever, if ever at all, is the technical and diplomatic question upon which, formally, war is commenced, expressive of the cause of the war, except very indirectly and incompletely. Often it is the merest pretext for war. If two governments are disputing over some matter on which neither wants to fight, an international arbitration court may help their diplomatists to save their faces. But that means simply that the question in dispute is, at the moment, the whole question at issue. It means that the question at issue can really be definitely stated in a manner that makes adjudication possible. But when that is the case war does not arise. War arises because one government at least has decided upon war if certain things happen, or, conversely, if certain things do not happen. When that great decision has been come to, no judgment of any imaginable tribunal can be anything but simply off the point. People who really believe in the prevention of war by such means remind me of good Mrs. Partington with her broom.

They remind me, also, of the fabled ostrich, poking his silly head into the desert sand. It is

not clear that their hopes rest on anything better than a refusal to face facts. The real object, however, of the people who talk in this fashion is to get the public to accept such a definition of our objects in this war as may lead to an early peace. To say that as soon as Germany is ready to accept proposals for the automatic avoidance of war in the future, the war should cease, is to say that, so far as it is not quite immediately defensive, the war has no rational purpose at all. That, I suspect, is just about what our semi-pacifists do mean. I regard all this talk about the establishment of a European commonwealth under the terms of a treaty as, at bottom, only a manifestation of irrational forms of the common will to peace.

The armament question is manifestly a mere detail. To say that the present war is a result of systematic armament by the European States is to put the cart before the horse. Armament is merely a result of an expectation of war. Under modern conditions where that expectation is strongest, there armament will be most systematic and elaborate. Artificial limitation of armaments would produce of itself not peace but the prolongation of war when war comes. If nations were reduced to beginning a war

with sticks and stones they would none the less begin it.

The truth is that never yet for a moment has there been peace in the world. In the peace of private life men strive with each other under rules which forbid actual violence. Workers struggle with employers, party with party, man with man, in that form of war which is called competition. In "peace," nations, too, fight each other under rules. They fight not with guns but with treaties and understandings, threats and promises, tariffs, and "peaceful penetrations." And sooner or later this mitigated war which is "peace" becomes unmitigated war. The strain becomes too great and the cord snaps. War—the war that existed through all the years of peace—is, as we say, *declared*. If ever there is peace in the world that peace will not be broken.

I do not wish to be understood as asserting—what I have not asserted—that the proposals for the setting up of international tribunals have no value at all. I think it would be absurd to say that. Such arrangements would have a certain value, if only as object lessons and guide posts. Their final value would depend on the amount and on the quality of the will behind them. I

will add that it seems to me that far more valuable in its effect than any such arrangements, would be a throwing down of the tariff walls that now divide the nations: such artificial boundaries disguise, and even partially destroy, the real economic unity of Europe.

We shall be tempted to make peace at the first moment of momentary safety. It may be that when that moment comes, we shall be in a position to force the hands of our Allies. If we should do that, Germany would at least have achieved one of her main objects in the war: the isolation of Britain.

But it is not upon any political or secondary considerations that I wish to dwell. If I were asked for what we are making war, I should say, first, for liberty: not for our liberty only, though that is enough, not even only for the liberty of Europe—I would say, rather, for the liberty of man. I have suggested already what I mean by that. At the very moment when Europe was developing more fully than ever before a consciousness of the sacredness of will, of the meaning and value of liberty, the German government set itself to dominate by the use of organized force. And so I say, secondly, that we are fighting for progress.

It is true that the peace of the world in the future depends upon the development of a predominant will to peace. That is, indeed, almost a truism. But that will must be positive. It must not be a mere reluctance to fight, a shrinking from consequences of war: it must, if it is to be really powerful, be free from any element of fear. I believe that the more we fear war, the more we shall have of it. That positive will to peace must involve an altered scheme of values for many of us. It must be based on a clear perception that all the things that matter are endangered by every form of selfish greed. It may be suggested that war will certainly not cease until men in private life cease to overreach and get the better of each other. But even then war would not necessarily cease. War is not rooted only in the selfish greed of men: it is rooted also in the idea of the State as a real entity with separate "interests" and a will of its own. When we see clearly the mere will to power for what it is—a destructive and anarchic thing—when we see the State as a means to the expression of our will to good, when we see that every human being transcends the State, then war will cease, and not, I think, till then. In the development of such a will to peace lies the best hope of our

civilization. All other hope of peace is vain. This peace may be long in coming. Yet in Europe, at least, this positive will to peace has, I believe, developed rapidly in the last hundred years. It is a real thing here and now. Never has there been a war in which so much of it was manifest. It runs, a lost thread, through the mazes of pacifist confusion. Here lies, I think, the narrow way of progress: and across this way the German Government has set its engines. Germany has attacked our young and growing civilization here in West Europe. If she wins there is an end of it for ages. But she cannot win. If she draws the battle there is equally an end of progress, at least for a generation. We must all, in that case, wait, armed to the teeth, for the inevitable renewal of the struggle. We shall have nothing to look forward to but war, whatever international tribunals may be set up to cry peace where there is no peace. The development of a right will to peace in Europe may, in that case, be rendered impossible, perhaps for ever.

I conclude, simply, that it is our duty to continue the war until Germany is, in a military sense, completely powerless. It is a terrible task; but the doing of right is often terrible,

and he who does not understand this, knows nothing of the depths of right and wrong. Defeat of Germany is not enough, if by that is meant merely defeat of the outrageous political aims with which she started the war. That would be partial defeat only: it would mean a check and no more. We are not making war for any mere political or secondary reasons; and no result that can be fully expressed in a treaty should satisfy us. We are in a position in which we cannot logically make peace until Germany has no choice but to accept our terms. We are waging war against a spirit and an idea and a method that will destroy our growing civilization if it be not killed. Perhaps we cannot kill it: but at least we need make no compromise with this power of evil. Terms offered by the present German Government should in any case be refused, unless they amount to a complete surrender. There is only one thing of real importance, and it is to get Germany helpless. When we have done that we can be as generous as we please. The more generous, then, we can find it in our hearts to be, the better for us.

In the early months of the war I wrote a little book. In that book I said that we must make no peace until Germany feels completely beaten;



that we must not agree with Germany, but must impose our terms. It is what I am saying now. But, when I wrote that book, I was under the impression that the terms of the treaty to come would really express the main results of the war. I do not know why it was that I made so foolish a mistake. Whatever the terms of the treaty express, it will not be that. The result of the war must depend, in the main, simply on the completeness of the moral defeat of Germany: and that again must depend on the completeness of her military defeat. To say that the precise terms of the treaty will not matter at all would be absurd. They will be valuable in strict proportion to the extent of the moral bankruptcy of Germany. They will make, of themselves, in the long run, little real difference to the future of Europe; unless, indeed, they were to be manifestly unjust or cruel. There is no reason whatever to suppose that they will, in any event, be that. We can see to that when the time comes. The one supremely important thing about the terms of the future treaty is simply this: that they shall represent agreement between us and our allies, and not agreement between us and Germany. That is all that, for the present, we need concern ourselves about.

The result of a drawn battle cannot be doubtful. It would mean that progress in every sense and direction would be barred for at least a generation. It would mean that we, like cowards, had passed on the punishment of our great refusal to our children and to our grand-children. In a very real sense, then, the war would have been fought in vain.

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